

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08 FRB-03
INR-10 NSAE-00 USIA-06 TRSE-00 XMB-02 OPIC-03
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R 140130Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON
TO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 5151

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EO 11652: N/A
TAGS: ETRD, EGEN, OVIP
SUBJECT: AUSTRALIA - NEW ZEALAND ECONOMIC RELATIONS

REF: 77 WELLINGTON 5066

1. CURRENT ISSUE OF RESPECTED LOCAL ECONOMIC NEWSLETTER
"TRANS TASMAN," PUBLISHED ON EVE OF FOREIGN MINISTER
TALBOY'S VISIT TO AUSTRALIA, CONTAINS INTERESTING
COMMENT THAT A STRONG ELEMENT IN THE AUSTRALIAN
BUREAUCRACY IN CANBERRA (ALTHOUGH NOT PM FRAZER HIMSELF)
IS ARGUING THAT NAFTA, AND IN FACT THE TOTAL NEW ZEALAND
RELATIONSHIP, IS RELATIVELY UNIMPORTANT AND SHOULD BE
DOWNGRADED. THE TASK OF FOREIGN MINISTER TALBOYS WILL BE
TO BLUNT THOSE ARGUMENTS AND PUT NEW VIGOR INTO THE
TRANS TASMAN RELATIONSHIP. PARTICULARLY, TALBOYS
WILL WANT TO BE SURE THAT ANY RENEWED PROTECTIONIST
EFFORT BY AUSTRALIA BYPASSES NEW ZEALAND. THIS VIEW
SEEMED TO BE GIVEN CONFIRMATION BY TALBOYS IN HIS
AIRPORT PRESS CONFERENCE PRIOR TO DEPARTURE WHEN HE
STRESSED THE ECONOMIC INTERDEPENDENCE OF THE TWO
COUNTRIES, EMPHASIZING THAT EACH WAS THE MAJOR MARKET
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FOR THE OTHER'S MANUFACTURED GOODS.

2. ACTION REQUESTED: IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO HAVE YOUR
OWN ASSESSMENT OF THE TRANS TASMAN RELATIONSHIP AS SEEN
FROM CANBERRA, PARTICULARLY REGARDING THE FUTURE OF
NAFTA (AS RAISED IN REFTEL). DO YOU DETECT "A STRONG
ELEMENT IN THE BUREAUCRACY" SEEKING TO DOWNGRADE THE

RELATIONSHIP WITH NEW ZEALAND AS REPORTED HERE OR WOULD
YOU REGARD THIS AS OVERSENSITIVITY ON FEW ZEALAND'S
PART? PERHAPS THESE QUESTIONS COULD BEST BE ADDRESSED
IN THE CONTEXT OF A WRAP-UP REPORT ON THE TALBOYS VISIT
UPON ITS COMPLETION IN THREE WEEKS, BUT YOUR VIEWS IN
ANY FORM WOULD BE WELCOME. SELDEN

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Message Attributes

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